

The Heterodyne

Newsletter of the West Valley Amateur Radio Association

Holiday Party - Pot Luck Wednesday December 14

The Holiday Pot Luck Will Be At Our Regular Meeting Location:

American Red Cross
Silicon Valley Chapter
2731 N. First Street at Plumeria Drive
(southwest corner) in San Jose.

**Setup Begins at 6:00pm
Dining at 6:30pm
Followed by Raffle!**



Club Net

WVARA's club net is on the W6PIY repeaters each Tuesday at 8:30 pm. All repeaters are linked together during the net. The net script can be found at <http://www.wvara.org/net.html>.

WVARA Repeater (W6PIY)			
Band	Frequency	PL	Status
6 Meters	52.580- MHz	151.4 Hz	Operating
2 Meters	147.39+ MHz	151.4 Hz	Operating
1.25 Meters	223.96- MHz	156.7 Hz	Operating
0.70 Meter	441.35+ MHz	88.5 Hz	Operating
0.23 Meter	1286.2- MHz	100 Hz	Operating

January Meeting

"Moon Bounce Communications"
by Eric Norris, WD6DBM
on Wednesday January 11

From ARLP050 Propagation de K7RA:

December 9: What happened to that new "grand minima?" Cycle 24 just keeps rolling along, and for the first seven days in December, there were eight new sunspot groups. December 5 had the largest sunspot coverage over the past week, with a daily sunspot number of 185. Average daily sunspot number for the week rose over nine points to 133.9, and average daily solar flux values rose exactly 19 points to 156.5.

New Member - Please Welcome:

Cheryl KJ6RNP

Welcome Aboard!

Member Call Sign Change:

Barry, ex-KJ6RAV is now K9AMO

DXing with Vintage Gear

by Carl Luetzelschwab K9LA

Do you need a new challenge in your Amateur Radio activities? I'd like to suggest that you enter a contest using vintage gear. You'll probably have to work a lot harder than if you used your modern equipment, but I suspect you'll have fun anyway.

I've used my vintage gear mostly in the ARRL's Straight Key Night (SKN) on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. But after I found and bought a Hallicrafters T.O. Keyer (one of the first commercial electronic keyers on the market) at the November 2008 Ft Wayne hamfest to go with my early-1960s Ranger II and Drake 2B station, I decided to take the station for a spin in the ARRL DX CW Contest in February 2009. My goal was to see how many countries I could work using this 1960s-vintage station. I also decided to restrict my efforts to 40m and 20m so I could use the temporary 20m/40m inverted-vee that we put up at 50 feet for our K9LA Multi-Op effort in the 2008 CQ Worldwide Phone contest.

I started the contest on 40m Friday night. It was kind of frustrating at first, what with getting used to the T.O. Keyer and having to work with a separate transmitter and receiver. But those little nuances soon disappeared as I started checking off the countries. Thank goodness I had built the simple electronic T/R switch that's in the 1963 ARRL Handbook (it uses a 6C4 tube) to go with this station – that was one less function to worry about. The picture on the right shows me with the Ranger II, T.O. Keyer, and Drake 2B.



After three hours on 40m on Friday night, I had 30 countries in the log. There was nothing rare about any of them – mostly Western Europe, the Caribbean, and South America. But they all counted. That was an encouraging start. I also got up in the middle of the night (due to a sick dog), and worked another 13 countries on 40m. Among those were a ZL and VK – not bad for 50 W or so to an inverted-vee in a contest environment.

On Saturday I cruised 20m, and spent as much time as I could at the radios in between errands and household chores. Towards evening I moved to 40m. I called it quits for the day around 7:30 PM. It was a productive day, with another 28 countries in the log. Again, there was nothing rare about the ones I added.

Now I was up to 71 countries. Finding news ones was getting tough, as it was very time consuming tuning an entire band and identifying each station (this was due to the fact that I had also decided to not use Packet). I should also mention that I logged all contacts with paper and pencil, but that wasn't a big issue since I was only looking for new countries.

Sunday morning brought more new ones in spurts – 3 more in a 2-hour stint on 20m in the morning, 2 more in a 1-hour stint on 20m in mid afternoon, and the final 3 in a 2-hour stint in the early evening on 40. Thus I ended up with 79 countries for the contest.

In summary, if you're looking for a challenge, think about actually using your old gear instead of just having it sit there collecting dust. A good place to really exercise your old equipment is in a CW contest. And don't forget to set a goal – my bet is you'll have to work hard to achieve it, but you'll have fun regardless of the outcome.

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2012

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See You At The Holiday Party!